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ABSTRACT

Considering that values and value systems are determinants of human behavior and that the school system is a primary agent of values inculcation, this study assesses whether the school setting has an impact on the value priorities of students. The Rokeach Value Survey was administered to 68 students of both sexes attending three local high schools in Shelby County, Tennessee. The schools included a public high school, a private church-related school, and a private school not associated with a church. A comparison of the three groups of students revealed an overall similarity of value orderings across schools with only six of the 36 values showing a significant discrepancy. The public school and private church school results were more closely related than either was to the private non-church school. Sex was a significant factor in the ranking of only two values. The overwhelming congruence of adolescent value systems in all three schools suggests that factors other than the school are more consequential in determining value priorities. Included are 12 tables, a bibliography, and the study instruments. (Author/KWL)

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A STUDY OF VALUE PRIORITIES AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

A THESIS

Presented to

the Faculty of the Graduate School

Memphis State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of

the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts in Teaching

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by

Eyleen H. Farmer

August 1986

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ABSTRACT

The Rokeach Value Survey was administered to 68 seniors attending three local high schools to dtermine whether school setting had an impact on the value priorities of these students. The schools included a public high school, a private church-related school, and a private school not associated with a church. A comparison of the three groups of students revealed an overall similarity of value orderings across schools with only six of the 36 values showing a significant discrenancy. The public school and private church school were more closely related than were either to the private non-church school. Sex was a significant factor in the ranking of only two values. The overwhelming congruence of adolescent value systems in all three schools suggests that factors other than the school are more consequential in determining value priorities.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Values and value systems are crucial determinants of human behavior, and because ours is a pluralistic society, dichotomous value systems are often in deadly conflict. While pluralism surely contributes to the wealth of American life, it also makes more difficult decisions pertaining to the allocation of limited resources - decisions grounded in values. Schools are inevitably disseminators of values, whether they wish to be so or not (it is acknowledged that schools certainly are not the only agents of values inculcation), but in recent years there has been disagreement about this socializing function of the schools.

Public education has been under attack not only for failure to perform what many people perceive to be its primary responsibility to society (the transmission of knowledge), but also for alleged forfeiture of the obligation to perpetuate widely revered values. On the other hand, this same institution is frequently viewed as the bastion of mass culture which overcomes those forces of divisiveness ever-present among us. Differences in political persuasion, in personal

history, in socioeconomic class, in ethnicity, for example, are thought to be secondary to the assumed similarity of experiences offered to youngsters by the educational process. In accord with this belief and in order to peacefully accommodate the myriad of value systems represented by children who use public education, the courts of our land have declared that all vestiges of religion be relegated to the private sector. This was done, of course, to protect freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution. But in the aftermath there has been among many people a feeling, sometimes vague and unspoken, other times angrily militant, that freedom-protecting legislation has somehow limited the prerogative to recognize and celebrate in traditional ways many things associated with American life (school Christmas pageants, school prayer, e.g.). What is seen as liberating to some is viewed as tyrannical by others. An especially heated issue has become the "liberalizing" of public schools, associated with the teaching of such things as situational ethics and evolution. Critics charge that secular humanism is itself a religion which must be removed from the schools (Melichar, 1983). There is at the base of this dissension a fundamental clash of values that legislation has not been able to resolve.

Many parents have dealt with their dissatisfaction by withdrawing support from public schools. One recent

demographic study suggests dramatic shifts in student populations (Cooper, 1984) to private, fundamentalist schools. It is predicted that by the 1988-89 school year fifteen percent of all school children will be enrolled in the private sector with a continued decline in public school enrollment. Cooper explains this shift by suggesting that the unwritten social "compact" between parents and public education to inculcate traditional American values has been broken, and that many parents want to restore what has been lost, namely "proper" (meaning Christian) moral education.

Of course, parental concern with education extends beyond character development, and the assumption by many people that the explosive growth of fundamentalist schools was an attempt to avoid racial integration is challenged in several studies (Nevin & Bills, 1976; Skerry, 1980). Skerry calls this assumption of motive "gross oversimplification" which ignores the more prevalent concerns such as perceived decline in academic standards in public schools, the court ordered ban on school prayer and religious observances, and changes in traditional curriculum (sex education, values clarification, etc.).

Significance of the Study

The health of public education is in peril, and the issues threatening that institution may all be included under the umbrella heading of "values

conflicts". Public policy ultimately will decide the fate of our schools, and it therefore seems important that policy makers be informed about the impact of various kinds of schooling in relation to the formation of values of our young. If school environment has only minimal impact when compared to other factors such as socioeconomic background, peer influence, or values of parents, then perhaps all the fuss is "much ado about nothing". If, on the other hand, it can be shown that school settings have significant and differing impacts, depending on that setting, then perhaps policy makers should take heed of trends that reflect what many Americans want and expect from the schools.

There is much dissonance among social scientists about how the subject of values should be approached. Lawrence Kohlberg (1980), for example, posits a sequential developmental theory in which moral decisions are based in part on one's level of cognitive maturity. By focusing on the mental processes involved in moral decision making rather than on the content of those decisions, Kohlberg has isolated and described six hierarchical stages of moral development (1963). His emphasis is on the transformations in reasoning that occur as individuals continually interpret and reinterpret society's objective standards in accordance with their present cognitive capacity. His "just community" model school has been a testing ground for

many of his theories. Secondly, "values clarification" is a psychological approach (Raths, Harmin, & Simon, 1978) which has in recent years been used extensively in the schools. The theoretical basis for this method is the belief that human growth and development can be facilitated by a self-knowledge of one's own values. This is an instructional program in which learning activities are designed to help students in this endeavor. This approach, which attempts to be value neutral, is under much attack for its subjectivity (McQuilkin, 1977; Rokeach, 1979). Thirdly, the behaviorist perspective (e.g. B. F. Skinner) even goes so far as to deny that humans have values at all (Rokeach, 1973).

Definition of Terms

This study maintains a narrow focus based on the descriptive approach to values developed by Rokeach (1968b, 1973) and Feather (1975). Rokeach begins with the assumption that people do have values and that they play an important part in shaping the way men and women choose to live together. He maintains that the study of personal values is more useful for social analytical purposes than the study of the much broader category of attitudes (Rokeach, 1979), despite the fact that attitudes have been the more favored subject for research. Rokeach offers several reasons for his preference for values as the focus of study (1968a).

An attitude, according to Rokeach's definition, is a "package of beliefs" about a specific object or situation which may be either evaluative or factual. A value is a conception that is more or less constant over time and provides the criterion for developing attitudes. In other words, values are the determinants of attitudes. Given these definitions, a person may have literally thousands of attitudes, but will possess only a very limited number of values - several dozens at the most. Furthermore, if it is true that persons have considerably fewer values than attitudes, then the value concept is more salient in terms of the information it can yield about the differences among people. Finally, values have a greater applicability across disciplines than do attitudes. Values research can provide important data to the fields of psychology, sociology, political science, theology, and education. Research on attitudes has much less to offer.

Central to the work of Rokeach and Feather is the definition of value as:

> an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. A value system is an enduring organization of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-states of existence along a continuum of relative importance (Rokeach, 1973, p. 5).

In other words, values are standards in relation to which humans exercise their freedom to make choices.

Rokeach distinguishes between two types of values: terminal and instrumental. Terminal refers to "ultimate" values, those having to do with the "end-states" of existence. Examples are "A comfortable life" and "Wisdom". Instrumental values are more concerned with behaviors. Examples are "Logical" and "Honest". Terminal values are what we strive for; instrumental values are what we "do" - they are instrumental in the attainment of terminal values. Rokeach further distinguishes between the types of values which are included on his scale: terminal values may either be personal or social. An example of a personal terminal value would be "Wisdom" or "Self-respect". Social terminal values would be those having to do with a broader concern, such as "A world at peace" or "Equality". Instrumental values may be moral or competence values (1973). Examples of those values designated moral would be "Honest" and "Forgiving". Examples of competence values are "Capable" and "Logical".

Rokeach developed the Value Survey in the 1960's as part of an effort to sharpen the focus of the earlier emphasis in social psychology on the easier-to-measure category of attitudes (Rokeach, 1968b), and this instrument has since been used to exiore every imaginable aspect of values and value systems in relation to social, institutional, and

circumstantial variables. Social variables would include such things as socioeconomic class and life style. Institutional variables refer to political or religious orientation. Circumstantial variables refer to age, sex, race, occupation, etc. Despite the widespread interest in values both within and across cultures, however, there is a deficit in the area of the school as an agent of values transmission for adolescents, especially in the context of American culture.

Literature Review

Feather has done extensive research in Australia using the Value Survey (1970, 1972, 1979, 1980), and his work guides the present study. Although the scope of Feather's work extends far beyond an interest in school impact, he does include this aspect of values inculcation in an exploratory way (see Feather, 1970, 1972). Feather (1970), for example, compared the value rankings of senior high boys in a state school (public) and a Methodist independent (private) school. He found that although there were differences in the way the boys ordered their own terminal and instrumental values, in general the patterns were similar. There was no apparent difference in the ranking of the so-called "Christian" values of Salvation and Forgiving despite the presence of a religious emphasis in the Methodist school (see Rokeach, 1979). These are

interesting findings, but their generalizability is minimal due to the limitations of the study (only two schools were used, and only a particularized set of test subjects was sampled). Other studies suggest that significant differences exist in the way boys and girls order their values in the Value Survey (Feather, 1972; Rokeach, 1973). In general, girls rank higher than boys those values associated with interpersonal relationships, and boys rank higher values associated with achievement and competence.

Feather (1970, 1972) also suggests a fundamental similarity of values among adolescents across varying school environments. There is a remarkable consistency between the two studies with respect to the value priorities of the sample subjects (see Tables 1 and 2). It should be noted, of course, that the values in between those which are labeled "Most important" and "Least important", there is considerably more discrepancy than indicated by the Tables. However, because it is easier for subjects to assign a rank order to the values most or least important to them, those in the middle tend to be more arbitrary anyway (Rokeach, 1973). In other words, some values will show a greater reliability than others.

The findings of these studies are difficult to interpret because the results are ambiguous. Both studies show differences in the way subjects attending

TABLE 1

Terminal Values of Students in State and Independent Schools in Feather's 1970 and 1972 Studies

		State	Independent
Most important (1970)	1.	Freedom	True friendship
	2.	Wisdom	Mature love
	3.	True friendship	Freedom/Wisdom
Least important (1970)	16.	National security	National security
	17.	Social recognition	Salvation
	18.	Salvation	World of beauty
Most important (1972)	1.	World at peace	True friendship
	2.	True friendship	Freedom
	3.	Freedom	World at peace
Least important (1972)	16.	National security	National security
	17.	Social recognition	Social recognition
	18.	Salvation	Salvation

TABLE 2

Instrumental Values of Students in State and Independent Schools in Feather's 1970 and 1972 Studies

		State	Independent
Most important (1970)	1.	Honest	Honest
	2.	Responsible	Responsible
	3.	Broadminded	Broadminded
	4.	Ambitious	Ambitious
Least important (1970)	15.	Imaginative	Imaginative
	16.	Helpful	Helpful
	17.	Clean	Clean
	18.	Obedient	Obedient
Most important (1972)	1.	Honest	Honest
	2.	Responsible	Responsible
	3.	Broadminded	Broadminded
	4.	Ambitious	Ambitious
Least important (1972)	15.	Imaginative	Imaginative
	16.	Helpful	Helpful
	17.	Clean	Clean
	18.	Obedient	Obedient

state and independent schools ranked both terminal and instrumental values, but also showed an overall similarity. What can this mean? It has been suggested that adolescents are subject to socializing forces far stronger than the school just by virtue of the fact that they are in the midst of a particular developmental stage (Feather, 1980). That this stage is characterized both by a struggle for independence from previous sources of authority and conformity to the expectations of the reference group is consistent with the value rankings of the samples tested. Specific findings of these studies (the particular rankings, for example) are not generalizable to the United States because significant cross-cultural ranking variations are indicated by prior research (Feather, 1980; Rokeach, 1973, 1979). Nevertheless, based on the comparisons of school influence presented in the Feather (1970, 1972) studies, the prediction could reasonably be made that while American students would order their values differently from students in other countries, the tendency for adolescents to have similar value hierarchies across school environments would remain constant. This prediction is not upheld by the evidence of research done with American secondary students, however.

Rokeach (1973) has done the seminal work with the values of Americans, and from his samplings national

norms have been established respective of sex, income, education, race, age (over 21) and religion. Median rank orderings for terminal and instrumental values of adolescents are presented in Table 3 and represent samples from the New York City public school system (Beech & Schoeppe, 1970). Because the samples are so limited, these findings cannot be given the status of norms, but are helpful nevertheless as indicators of value priorities to expect from subsequent studies.

Data concerning the specific research question to which this study attempts to respond is extremely sketchy. One study that does compare the impact of public and private schools, however, shows findings that are puzzling when related to the assumptions drawn from the large scale and respected work done by Rokeach and Feather (Muhilly, 1984). Eleventh graders from a private school and from a public school ordered their own and perceived school values using the Value Survey. The evidence regarding terminal values is generally consistent with previous findings. In respect to instrumental values, however, results are quite dissimilar. This researcher found a negative correlation between the values of those two groups of students. The public school students ranked the values of Capable, Helpful, and Obedient higher than did the private school students. The private school students

TABLE 3

Composite Rank Orders of Values of 17 Yr. Olds in New York City

Terminal		Instrumental	
A world at peace	1	Honest	1
Equality	2	Ambitious	2
Freedom	3	Loving	3
Wisdom	4	Responsible	4
Happiness	5	Courageous	5
Family security	6	Broadminded	6
Self respect	7	Capable	7
True friendship	8	Independent	8
Inner harmony	9	Helpful	9
A sense of accomplishment	10	Forgiving	10
Mature love	11	Clean	11
A comfortable life	12	Self controlled	12
An exciting life	13	Polite	13
Social recognition	14	Intellectual	14
Pleasure	15	Cheerful	15
A world of beauty	16	Logical	16
National security	17	Obedient	17
Salvation	18	Imaginative	18

(N=193)
Beech and Schoeppe (1970)

ranked higher the values of Courageous, Intellectual, and Self controlled.

Also contrary to previous findings is a study conducted by Brown and Lawson (1980). In this project, values in public schools and three church-related schools (Catholic, Episcopal, Friends) were compared. Results showed significant discrepancies in four instrumental values and in four terminal values. The greatest variance between groups was the order designated to Salvation (ranked 1st by Catholics and 17th by Episcopalians and Friends). This finding directly contradicts the Australian studies in which Salvation was ranked at the bottom by both public and private school students (Feather 1970, 1972). Brown and Lawson suggest that the two populations in question (private school students and public school students) may have a "different hierarchy of values" (p. 281). It should be noted that the samples used by Brown and Lawson included only seventh and eighth grade students. Given that values in humans change continually from early adolescence to old age (Rokeach, 1973), it can be concluded that if the same sample of 13 year olds was to be tested again at 15 years and at 17 years, the rank orderings of their own values would show some changes. In other words, part of the conflict in results can perhaps be accounted for developmentally. Reportings of the Brown-Lawson study did not include

the value rankings given by their sample, and therefore, cannot be compared to the relevant data on 13 year olds contributed by Beech and Schoeppe.

That the Australian studies and American studies are discrepant in their findings may suggest something significant about our own culture. Of course, there is not nearly enough evidence on either side of the question to posit any meaningful explanation, but perhaps there are sufficient grounds for asking if there is a greater disharmony of values within American society than is true of Australian society.

Research Question

Specifically, the present study attempts to answer the question, "Are there differences in the terminal and instrumental value priorities among senior high adolescents in public schools and private schools?" Does the religious orientation of some schools make them effective agents of value-socialization? Rokeach (1973, 1979) asserts that society's institutions (economic, educational, religious, political) specialize in the transmission of certain aspects of the American cultural value system. He posits a "division of labor" among these institutions for the process of value inculcation. Educational institutions can be expected, for example, to place the greatest emphasis on values associated with competence (Sense of accomplishment, Self respect, Capable, Intellectual).

On the other hand, in our society religious institutions are expected to implement and transmit a different cluster of values. These would include values associated with religious goals (Salvation and Forgiving, for example). The implications for later manisfestations of value preferences as they pertain to social and political attitudes may be of some importance. Based on findings of the prior research, it was expected that an overall similarity of value priorities among students in various school settings would be revealed by this study. If differences were to emerge, it was predicted that students in the private church-shool would rank the religious values of Salvation and Forgiving higher (due to the religious emphasis of such schools) than would students in the public school or non-church related private school. Furthermore, the sex of subjects has been shown to be a somewhat reliable predictor of value preferences (Feather, 1972, 1979; Rokeach, 1973) with females showing a tendency to give higher priority to conservative values associated with ego defense and conformity to authority (such as Salvation, Security, Obedience, Polite). Although in the public mind church schools are associated with conservative political attitudes of parents (correlated by Rokeach with ranking Freedom higher than Equality), it was not expected that high school students would show any

differences in such institutional correlates. This expectation was based on the assumption (supported by Kohlberg) of developmental factors as primary contributors to an adolescent's value structure. In other words, the supposition of cognitive prerequisites for the various levels of moral reasoning places limits on the kind of thinking that is possible at any given developmental stage and relegates to secondary importance external agents of values socialzation (parents, peers, societal institutions).

Chapter 2

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects selected for this study were high school seniors of both sexes attending a public school and two private schools in Shelby County, Tennessee. The independent variable was the schools selected for this study, whereas the dependent variable was rankings of values on Rokeach's (1968) Value Survey (see next section). Schools covering a range of educational options for secondary students were asked to participate. These included a community-based public school (this selection was limited to the Shelby County system in order to minimize socioeconomic differences prevalent in most Memphis City Schools), a private, church-related school with a reputation for theological conservatism, and a non-church related private school of long standing. The public school is in an affluent suburb; both private schools charge tuition. In the case of the church-related school, a class was chosen by the school's principal to take part in this project. The participating class consisted of 14 girls and 7 boys. In the case of the non-church related school the entire senior class took part. This class was

comprised of 16 girls and 5 boys. In the public school the researcher selected a class of students to be tested. There were 18 girls and 8 boys in the public school class. (See Table 4 for a summary of participating subjects.) Only one student in any of the classes declined to complete the Value Survey.

Instrumentation

The Value Survey, developed by Rokeach, was the assessment instrument used in this study. In accordance with his theory, instrumental and terminal values comprised separate lists, and the subjects' task was to rank order the values on each list in order of importance to them (#1 being the most important; #18 the least). These rankings comprised the dependent variable. There are 18 values in each list yielding a total of 36 values. Both lists present the values alphabetically. The instrument included a brief defining phrase for each value.

The choice of the Value System as the assessment instrument was made with the realization of its limitations. It has been suggested that by presenting respondents with an exclusive list some important values may be left out (Feather, 1975), such as justice or loyalty, for example. On the other hand, subjects may be forced to rank values of no importance to them. There is no way to locate the values on a continuum (the subject may struggle to rank order values in

TABLE 4

Summary of Subjects

School	Males	Females	Total
Private Church School	7	14	21
Public School	8	18	26
Private Non-Church	5	16	21
TOTAL	20	48	68

second and third place but then easily rank places four and five). This instrument provides no mechanism for making such fine distinctions.

The Value Survey has many positive features that outweigh its limitations for the purposes of this study, however. It is economical, simple to administer and take, and provides a fairly comprehensive index of information about the respondents' values. Furthermore, it is flexible in its usefulness to many fields and does not require any disguise. It is projective in nature since the subject can glean no cues from the instrument itself. The respondent must rely completely on his internalized value organization. All the values are positive thereby reducing perceived bias by the respondent. Test-retest median reliability for Form E (the mimeographed version) is reported at .74 for terminal values and .65 for instrumental values (Rokeach, 1973). For Form D (in which gummed labels are used) median reliability is slightly higher. Reliability medians of individual values are consistently higher for terminal than for instrumental values. (Test-retest reliabilities range from .88 for Salvation to .45 for Responsible.)

Procedure

The students were asked to fill out an anonymous questionnaire providing demographic information such as age, sex, parents' occupations, religious affiliation,

whether or not they attended religious services regularly, and how long they had attended their particular school. Then, the Rokeach Value Survey was presented by a teacher with whom the students were already familiar. Subjects were instructed to work independently and carefully so that the survey would reflect accurately how they really felt. Students were further instructed to arrange the values on both lists in the Survey in order of importance to them. Number 1 would be the most important; number 2 the second most important, and so on to number 18 which would be the least important. Respondents were told that they could change their minds and rearrange the rank order as many times as they wished so that the completed survey would be as accurate as possible. There was no time limit for completion of the Value Survey.

Data Analysis

For each group of students mean rankings for each value were obtained and then intercorrelated across school settings using the Spearman Rank Order procedure. This yielded a comparison among the average value systems of students in the three schools. Analysis of Variance was then used in order to designate particular differences in the rankings. To determine the significance of the sex factor, t-tests were conducted using the value means of males versus females.

Chapter 3

RESULTS

Subject Demographics

The students who participated in this study were seniors attending three local high schools. In the private church school there were 7 boys and 14 girls reporting affiliations to two protestant denominations. Eighty-one percent said they did attend religious services regularly; 19% said they did not regularly attend. The public school sample consisted of 8 males and 18 females. Six different categories of religious preferences were reported with 46% indicating regular church attendance. The remainder of this sample (54%) said they did not attend services. In the private non-church school the entire senior class (except for two absences on the day of the survey), consisting of 5 boys and 16 girls, took part. Twenty-nine percent claimed no religious affiliation at all, with the remaining 71% reporting affiliations in six categories. Of the total sample from this school, 67% did not attend religious services; 33% indicated that they did attend services regularly. Approximately one third of the students in each of the three schools said their mothers did not work outside the home.

Comparative Rankings

Honest, Loving, and Responsible were among the top five instrumental values for students in all three schools. Among terminal values, Happiness was the only value in the top four of each school. Least important among terminal values in all three schools were Social recognition and A world of beauty (among the bottom three). Imaginative was the only instrumental value ranked in common among schools at the bottom of the list.

Mean rankings for instrumental and terminal values for each of the three groups of students were calculated yielding six sets of data. The means thus obtained are presented in Table 5 and Table 6 and indicate the "average" value systems for each group. To compare these averages, the mean rankings for each set of values (instrumental and terminal) were intercorrelated across school settings using the Spearman rank order coefficient. To pinpoint differences among schools in the degree of importance assigned to particular values an Analysis of Variance procedure was used, followed by the Scheffe technique (for those values showing a significant difference) to distinguish which school varied from the others. Results of these analyses for the terminal values of the three schools are shown in Table 5. Table 6 indicates similar information pertaining to

TABLE 5

Mean Rankings of Terminal Values for Students in Relation to Schools and Results of Analyses of Variance

Terminal Value	School 1 (N=21)	2 (N=26)	3 (N=21)	p
Mature love	5.57 (1)	9.12 (6)	8.33 (6)	.05
Salvation	6.00 (2)	10.65 (14)	12.10 (16)	.01
True friendship	6.62 (3)	6.42 (1)	10.10 (12)	.01
Happiness	6.76 (4)	7.00 (3)	6.67 (2)	N.S.
Wisdom	6.81 (5)	7.81 (5)	10.95 (14)	.05
Freedom	7.76 (6)	7.12 (4)	6.81 (3)	N.S.
Family security	7.81 (7)	9.50 (9)	5.52 (1)	.01
Self respect	7.95 (8)	6.54 (2)	8.10 (5)	N.S.
Inner harmony	8.19 (9)	9.85 (12)	7.67 (4)	N.S.
A world at peace	9.76 (10)	9.35 (7.5)	9.33 (9)	N.S.
A comfortable life	10.24 (11)	9.73 (11)	9.91 (10.5)	N.S.
A sense of accomplishment	10.71 (12)	9.58 (10)	9.29 (8)	N.S.
An exciting life	11.62 (13)	9.35 (7.5)	8.38 (7)	N.S.
Pleasure	12.00 (14)	10.58 (13)	9.91 (10.5)	N.S.
National security	12.30 (15)	13.50 (18)	11.05 (15)	N.S.
Social recognition	13.62 (16)	11.42 (16)	12.52 (17)	N.S.
A world of beauty	13.65 (17)	12.39 (17)	13.86 (18)	N.S.
Equality	14.00 (18)	11.12 (15)	10.52 (13)	N.S.

School 1 = Private Church School
School 2 = Public School
School 3 = Private Non-Church School

TABLE 6

Mean Rankings of Instrumental Values for Students in Relation to Schools and Results of Analyses of Variance

Instrumental Values	School 1 (N=21)		2 (N=26)		3 (N=21)		p
Responsible	5.24	(1)	5.42	(2)	7.38	(5)	N.S.
Loving	5.38	(2)	6.39	(3)	7.05	(3)	N.S.
Honest	5.62	(3)	4.42	(1)	4.57	(1)	N.S.
Forgiving	7.57	(4)	9.15	(7)	10.10	(10)	N.S.
Courageous	8.33	(5)	9.58	(8)	11.57	(14.3)	N.S.
Helpful	8.43	(6)	11.15	(13.5)	6.29	(2)	.01
Self controlled	8.71	(7)	8.65	(6)	9.62	(9)	N.S.
Independent	8.81	(8)	7.92	(4)	8.52	(7)	N.S.
Cheerful	9.29	(9)	11.69	(17)	9.43	(8)	N.S.
Polite	9.48	(10)	8.62	(5)	11.57	(14.3)	N.S.
Ambitious	10.19	(11)	10.08	(10)	7.33	(4)	N.S.
Broadminded	10.29	(12)	9.62	(9)	8.33	(6)	N.S.
Obedient	10.48	(13)	11.15	(13.5)	11.57	(14.3)	N.S.
Capable	11.00	(14)	10.96	(12)	11.52	(13)	N.S.
Logical	11.91	(15)	11.54	(16)	11.43	(12)	N.S.
Clean	12.05	(16)	10.62	(11)	11.91	(17.5)	N.S.
Imaginative	13.57	(17)	12.46	(18)	11.91	(17.5)	N.S.
Intellectual	14.10	(18)	11.50	(15)	11.10	(11)	N.S.

School 1 = Private Church School
School 2 = Public School
School 3 = Private Non-Church School

instrumental values. Finally, t-tests for each of the 36 values were conducted to determine whether sex was a factor in ordering values.

There were statistically significant differences in value rankings among schools on the instrumental value of Helpful and on the terminal values of Family security, Mature love, Salvation, True friendship, and Wisdom. The value showing the greatest discrepancy was Salvation, which was ordered second by students in the private church school, 14th by the public school pupils, and 16th by students in the non-church private school. This was consistent with prediction. The instrumental "religious" value of Forgiving was also ranked higher by the private church school, but the difference failed to achieve significance. Students in the private church school also gave a higher priority (rank = 1) to Mature love than students in the public school (rank = 6), and rated Wisdom higher (rank = 5) than those in the non-church private school (rank = 14). The private non-church school pupils gave higher ratings (ranks = 1 and 2, respectively) than public school students to the values of Family security and Helpful (ranks = 9 and 13.5, respectively). Students at both the public school and the private church school rated True friendship higher (ranks = 1 and 3, respectively) than did students from the private non-church school (rank = 12).

Similarity Indices

In order to examine the general similarities among overall systems of the three schools, the mean rankings of instrumental and terminal values were intercorrelated separately for each pairing of schools using the Spearman rank order procedure. A summary of results in Table 7 indicates that the relationships are strongest for those involving both the instrumental and terminal values of the public school and the private church school ($r = .76$ and $.70$, respectively). On instrumental values there was a positive correlation between the public school and the private church school and between both private schools (both significant at the .01 level). On terminal values statistically significant correlations were between the public school and the church school ($r = .70$, $p < .01$) and between the public and private non-church school ($r = .61$, $p < .05$). Note that the similarity among all three schools was higher overall on instrumental values than on terminal values. The private church school and the public school showed a greater similarity between them than did either with the private non-church school. All correlations were positive indicating a general similarity in adolescent value priorities. These results support the prediction that there would be basic congruence in the way students ranked both value scales regardless of school setting. Those

TABLE 7

Similarity Indices Comparing Average Value Systems for the Public School, Private Church School, and Private Non-Church School

Group	1	2	3
1. Public School		.702	.615
2. Private Church School	.756		.423
3. Private Non-Church School	.461	.633	

Note: Correlations of terminal values are above the diagonal; correlations of instrumental values are below the diagonal.

correlations hovering around the .40 mark, however, show some room for difference.

A comparison among the three schools of standard deviations of mean value rankings reveals (see Table 8) that the greatest variability within samples was in the public school sample. The greatest internal consistency was in the private church school sample, although the trend was not dramatic. For 19 of the 36 values the church school showed less variability than the other schools; the public school had lower standard deviations on 5 values; the private non-church school on 12.

Sex Factor

Results of the t-tests presented in Tables 9 and 10 indicate that sex was a significant factor in ranking only two of the 36 values. Regarding instrumental values, boys ranked Courageous higher overall than girls did (.01 level of significance), and girls ranked Polite higher than the boys ($p < .05$). Girls also ranked the instrumental values Cheerful and Helpful higher than the male students, while boys gave higher preference to Ambitious, Imaginative, Logical, Obedient and Self controlled. In regard to terminal values, there were no statistically significant discrepancies. The greatest difference in value rankings was Self respect, which was rated first by girls but 8th by boys (tied with True friendship and A

TABLE 8

Standard Deviations of Dependent Variables in Relation to Three Sample Populations

Group	1	2	3
Ambitious	5.10	*4.62	4.73
Broadminded	*4.38	5.39	5.44
Capable	3.91	4.70	*3.12
Cheerful	*4.31	4.79	6.03
Clean	*4.44	4.53	5.60
Courageous	*4.65	4.74	4.85
Forgiving	5.48	4.89	*4.72
Helpful	4.88	4.51	*3.74
Honest	4.17	4.55	*3.81
Imaginative	*4.56	5.33	4.86
Independent	6.17	*5.04	5.16
Intellectual	*3.86	4.89	5.19
Logical	5.14	*4.38	5.09
Loving	*5.04	5.13	5.33
Obedient	4.95	4.76	*4.40
Polite	*3.76	4.50	4.58
Responsible	*3.78	3.93	5.09
Self controlled	4.41	5.35	*3.48
A comfortable life	*4.56	4.69	5.74
An exciting life	*3.93	5.02	4.64
A sense of accomplishment	*4.43	4.68	5.02
A world at peace	5.62	5.63	*5.51
A world of beauty	4.72	5.32	*4.61
Equality	5.08	*4.89	5.79
Family security	3.82	4.67	*3.72
Freedom	4.80	4.79	*4.75
Happiness	*3.90	3.99	4.79
Inner harmony	4.55	4.82	*4.27
Mature love	*3.36	5.14	4.49
National security	*4.18	4.99	5.41
Pleasure	*4.27	5.20	4.28
Salvation	6.66	5.98	*4.86
Self respect	5.26	*3.91	4.64
Social recognition	*3.63	4.46	5.34
True friendship	*2.97	4.21	5.20
Wisdom	*3.70	5.56	3.72

Group 1 = Private Church School
Group 2 = Public School
Group 3 = Private Non-Church School

* indicates lowest standard deviation

TABLE 9

Rankings of Instrumental Values of Males and Females

Males	Females
Honest	Honest
Responsible	Responsible
Courageous	Loving
Loving	Helpful
*Independent	Independent
*Self controlled	Forgiving
Ambitious	Polite
Forgiving	Broadminded
Broadminded	Self controlled
Helpful	Ambitious
Obedient	Cheerful
Capable	Courageous
Logical	Capable
*Clean	Obedient
*Polite	Clean
Imaginative	Logical
Cheerful	Intellectual
Intellectual	Imaginative

* indicates tie

TABLE 10

Rankings of Terminal Values of Males and Females

Males	Females
Freedom	Self respect
Happiness	Happiness
Mature love	True friendship
Family security	Family security
Wisdom	Freedom
Inner harmony	Mature love
An exciting life	Wisdom
*True friendship	Inner harmony
*Self respect	A world at peace
*A sense of accomplishment	Salvation
Pleasure	A comfortable life
Salvation	A sense of accomplishment
A comfortable life	An exciting life
A world at peace	Equality
National security	Pleasure
Social recognition	Social recognition
A world of beauty	National security
Equality	A world of beauty

sense of accomplishment). Girls also rated A world at peace, Equality, and True friendship higher. Boys assigned greater importance to An exciting life, Freedom, Pleasure, and Mature love. Congruent among students of both sexes were the instrumental values Honest, Responsible, Loving, Independent, Broadminded, Capable, Clean, and Intellectual. Similarly ranked terminal values were Happiness, Family security, Wisdom, Inner Harmony, National security, Social recognition, Salvation, A comfortable life, and A world of beauty. While the differences were generally consistent with anticipation, there were fewer significant contrasts between girls and boys than expected. This may be accounted for in part by the small sample size for males.

Chapter 4

DISCUSSION

The primary concern of this study was to compare the value rankings of high school students in public and private schools. Results in general supported the prediction that students would share similar value priorities regardless of their school environment. There were very few differences in the rankings of values among students attending different schools. (As summarized in Tables 5 and 6, only one instrumental value and five terminal values varied significantly.) The inconsistency among schools in the importance assigned to Salvation was again consonant with expectations. Students attending the private church school emphasized Salvation to a much greater extent (2nd) than did the other respondents (14th and 16th), and this is in accordance with the declared religious orientation of that school. It is interesting to note that in none of the schools did pupils rank Salvation as low as did students in Feather's Australian studies (1970, 1972) or Rokeach's research (1973) in which Salvation was consistently ranked last. This probably reflects the shaping influence of regional peculiarities. The southern United States, for

example, has historically conformed more closely to traditional religious and political values than other areas of the country. The other value identified by Rokeach (1969) as distinctively Christian (Forgiving) was given a higher priority by the church school (4th, as opposed to rankings of 7 in the public school and 10 in the other private school), but the difference failed to reach significance.

Despite the overall conformity of findings to predictions, there were some unanticipated differences in the ranking of particular values for the students in the three schools. This suggests differential impact of schools upon these values of students as well. That the church school students stressed Wisdom and Mature love more than other students could be the result of a religious influence exerted by their school. True friendship emerged as having relatively less importance for students in the private non-church school than in either of the other schools and may reflect that school's focus on academic achievement. Higher status was awarded the values of Ambitious and Intellectual (not at acceptable levels of significance) among these students, and this would appear to be consistent with the school's reputation for competitive achievement. Students in the private non-church school also placed a greater emphasis on the instrumental value of Helpful and the terminal value of Family security, but it would

be hazardous to make generalizations about these differences.

Differences in value rankings may be accounted for by many factors other than school environment. Family background and socioeconomic status, for example, are known to be strong predictors of value orderings (Rokeach, 1973), and this study makes no claim to finely discriminate subjects according to these criteria. It was assumed that parents of students in all three schools could afford to choose what kind of education they wanted for their children, but this assumption must be tempered with the realization that, in general, students attending the private non-church school come from families of a slightly higher socioeconomic strata.

The slightly lower variability in rankings for the private church sample (see Table 8) may suggest that this school is having more impact upon its students' values than the other schools are having on theirs. An alternative explanation, however, could be that parents choosing an education with a strong religious emphasis are more alike than are parents of children using either public education facilities or a private school not geared to religious training. In other words, the greater internal constancy of value hierarchies in the church school could denote a subject selection bias. These parents would have a tendency to choose a school

that matched their own values, thus confounding the supposed influence of their childrens' educational setting. Demographic information obtained from the respondents supports this explanation. For example, students in the church school reported only two different religious affiliations, and both of these were to conservative protestant denominations. The non-church private school students reported affiliations to seven categories; the public school students reported affiliations to six. It is interesting to note, although not statistically significant, that the values of Broadminded and Equality were more preferred by students in settings where it would be necessary to accommodate a greater variety of religious backgrounds.

Sex Factor

Only two of the 36 values were found to vary significantly according to sex (see Table 9 for instrumental values and Table 10 for terminal values). Honest, Responsible, and Loving were among the top four instrumental values of both girls and boys; Intellectual and Imaginative were among the least important for both sexes. Males and females ranked the terminal values of Happiness and Family security in the top four of importance while A world of beauty and Social recognition were rated as least important (among the bottom four terminal values). Boys gave a

significantly higher preference to Courageous (rank = 3) than did the girls (rank = 12), and girls rated as more important Polite (rank = 7) than did the boys (rank = 14.5). Self respect, the number one terminal value for girls, was given lower preference by boys (tied with True friendship and A sense of accomplishment for 8th place), but the difference was not statistically significant. The differences that do exist are consistent with the findings of previous research (Feather, 1972, 1979; Rokeach 1973) which suggests that males place a greater stress on competence and achievement values such as Ambitious and Logical. Predictably, girls placed greater emphasis on values pertaining to affiliative relationships such as Helpful, Polite, and Cheerful. These differences are, of course, ones associated with sex role socialization. However, differences by sex were fewer in number than might be anticipated. This could possibly reflect the impact of some recent changes in role expectations for men and women, but due to the small sample size for boys, it is not admissible to draw such a conclusion.

Comparison to Other Studies

A comparison between the value systems of high school students in Shelby County, Tennessee and students tested in other studies (Feather, 1970, 1972; Beech & Schoeppe, 1970) suggest that regional influences are a factor in ordering one's values.

While 17 year olds in New York City ranked the terminal values A world at peace and Equality as the two most important to them (Beech & Schoeppe, 1970), these values were given relatively low importance by students in the present study. Of course, it is also possible that changes in the political climate since 1970 could just as well account for this inconsistency. Freedom was ranked as one of the top three terminal values of students in both studies as well as in Feather's Australian studies (1970, 1972). National security, Social recognition, and A world at peace were very similarly ranked as least important in all of these studies. Salvation was assigned greater importance by the current sample than in any of the others under consideration.

In reference to instrumental values, Honest was given number one preference by all samples except the church school used in this project. Responsible was also highly ranked in all samples. While Ambitious was assigned a high level of importance by Australian and New York City students, it was rated 10th and 11th by the public school and the church school in this study. Helpful and Obedient were rated higher by Shelby County students, and Broadminded was rated lower. Imaginative received low priority in all samples. The overall conclusion that can be drawn from such a comparison is that students in the southern United States are, in

general, more conservative than students in these other samples. This conjecture is supported by Feather's research (1979) in which values were correlated to conservatism. Conservative values were assumed to be those associated with conformity and ego defense (Obedience, Salvation, etc.). Negatively correlated to conservatism were values such as Equality, Intellectual, and Broadminded. These correlates (both positive and negative) are, in fact, consonant with the priorities indicated by students in the present study. This is not a firm conclusion, however, since it is probable that there have been some changes over time in attitudes of student populations in both Australia and New York City.

The findings about the characteristics of value systems of high school students are interesting in their own right. The composite value systems presented in Tables 11 and 12 are those of persons with concerns unique to their particular stage in life. Apprehensions about peer acceptance, identity formation, as well as the need for independence from established symbols of authority, are reflected in how these high school seniors determined their value priorities. There is a strong emphasis on True friendship, for example, which implies conformity to the expectations of the peer group, but there is also positive preference given to Independence with the

TABLE 11

Composite Rank Orders of Terminal Values

School 1	2	3
Mature love	True friendship	Family security
Salvation	Self respect	Happiness
True friendship	Happiness	Freedom
Happiness	Freedom	Inner harmony
Wisdom	Wisdom	Self respect
Freedom	Mature love	Mature love
Family security	*An exciting life	An exciting life
Self respect	*A world at peace	A sense of accomplishment
Inner harmony	Family security	A world at peace
A world at peace	A sense of accomplishment	*A comfortable life
A comfortable life	A comfortable life	*Pleasure
A sense of accomplishment	Inner harmony	True friendship
An exciting life	Pleasure	Equality
Pleasure	Salvation	Wisdom
National security	Equality	National security
A world of beauty	Social recognition	Salvation
Social recognition	A world of beauty	Social recognition
Equality	National security	A world of beauty

* indicates tie

School 1 = Private Church
School 2 = Public
School 3 = Private Non-Church

TABLE 12

Composite Rank Orders of Instrumental Values

School 1	2	3
Responsible	Honest	Honest
Loving	Responsible	Helpful
Honest	Loving	Loving
Forgiving	Independent	Ambitious
Courageous	Polite	Responsible
Helpful	Self controlled	Broadminded
Self controlled	Forgiving	Independent
Independent	Courageous	Cheerful
Cheerful	Broadminded	Self controlled
Polite	Ambitious	Forgiving
Ambitious	Clean	Intellectual
Broadminded	Capable	Logical
Obedient	*Helpful	Capable
Capable	*Obedient	**Courageous
Logical	Intellectual	**Obedient
Clean	Logical	**Polite
Imaginative	Cheerful	*Clean
Intellectual	Imaginative	*Imaginative

* indicates two-way tie
** indicates three-way tie

School 1 = Private Church
School 2 = Public
School 3 = Private Non-Church

conflicting implication of freedom from external constraints. At the same time, they show very little awareness of social or political issues (note the low preference given to Equality and A world at peace). One explanation can be found in Rokeach's (1973) description of a variety of developmental patterns relating age to particular clusters of value preferences. These patterns suggest that one's position in the life cycle may be one of the most reliable predictors of values orderings. Kohlberg's developmental model of moral maturity lends credence to this hypothesis.

Conclusions

The findings of this study were interpreted subjectively, and effects suggested herein may not be replicated in subsequent studies. However, the general conclusions that can be drawn suggest similarities among value systems and differences with respect to a few particular values. Values are certainly influenced by one's school experience, but they are also molded by other complex factors largely outweighing the school's impact. It would be worthwhile to conduct longitudinal studies in order to track the development of value systems through various stages in the life cycle and to study the effects of changes in the social and political climate. The identification of determinants shaping the develoment of specific values and of value

patterns continues to be an important task for researchers in the future.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

1. SEX _____ M _____ F
2. DATE OF BIRTH _____
3. PLACE OF BIRTH _____
4. OCCUPATION OF FATHER _____
5. OCCUPATION OF MOTHER _____
6. WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT GRADE LEVEL? _____
7. HOW LONG HAVE YOU ATTENDED THIS SCHOOL? _____
8. RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION _____
9. DO YOU REGULARLY ATTEND RELIGIOUS SERVICES? _____
10. DID YOU UNDERSTAND THE VALUE SURVEY? _____YES _____NO

INSTRUMENTAL VALUES

_____	1. AMBITIOUS (hard-working, aspiring)	_____
_____	2. BROADMINDED (open-minded)	_____
_____	3. CAPABLE (competent, effective)	_____
_____	4. CHEERFUL (lighthearted, joyful)	_____
_____	5. CLEAN (neat, tidy)	_____
_____	6. COURAGEOUS (standing up for your beliefs)	_____
_____	7. FORGIVING (willing to pardon others)	_____
_____	8. HELPFUL (working for the welfare of others)	_____
_____	9. HONEST (sincere, truthful)	_____
_____	10. IMAGINATIVE (daring, creative)	_____
_____	11. INDEPENDENT (self-reliant, self-sufficient)	_____
_____	12. INTELLECTUAL (intelligent, reflective)	_____
_____	13. LOGICAL (consistent, rational)	_____
_____	14. LOVING (affectionate, tender)	_____
_____	15. OBEDIENT (dutiful, respectful)	_____
_____	16. POLITE (courteous, well-mannered)	_____
_____	17. RESPONSIBLE (dependable, reliable)	_____
_____	18. SELF-CONTROLLED (restrained, self-disciplined)	_____

TERMINAL VALUES

_____	1. A COMFORTABLE LIFE (a prosperous life)	_____
_____	2. AN EXCITING LIFE (a stimulating, active life)	_____
_____	3. A SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT (lasting contribution)	_____
_____	4. A WORLD AT PEACE (free of war and conflict)	_____
_____	5. A WORLD OF BEAUTY (beauty of nature and the arts)	_____
_____	6. EQUALITY (brotherhood, equal opportunity for all)	_____
_____	7. FAMILY SECURITY (taking care of loved ones)	_____
_____	8. FREEDOM (independence, free choice)	_____
_____	9. HAPPINESS (contentedness)	_____
_____	10. INNER HARMONY (freedom from inner conflict)	_____
_____	11. MATURE LOVE (sexual and spiritual intimacy)	_____
_____	12. NATIONAL SECURITY (protection from attack)	_____
_____	13. PLEASURE (an enjoyable, leisurely life)	_____
_____	14. SALVATION (saved, eternal life)	_____
_____	15. SELF-RESPECT (self-esteem)	_____
_____	16. SOCIAL RECOGNITION (respect, admiration)	_____
_____	17. TRUE FRIENDSHIP (close companionship)	_____
_____	18. WISDOM (a mature understanding of life)	_____